

SOME REMARKS ON QUESTIONABLE TYPES.

By CHARLES W. JOHNSON, *Boston Society of Natural History.*

In the Canadian Entomologist for December, 1926, Mr. C. H. Curran erects some peculiar types for *Comantella falliei* Back, which he calls "Lectoholotype" and "Lectoallotype." Now a lectotype is a cotype chosen to take the place which in other cases a holotype occupies. Many do not recognize lectotypes.

A cotype by another name
To them's a cotype just the same,
And it is nothing more.

As to the specimen designated a "Lectoallotype," it was not one of the specimens studied by Dr. Back. Both of these are still in my collection and labeled by him, "Cotypes *C. falliei*." The locality Montclair, Calif., in Dr. Back's paper should have read Montclair, Col. The specimen was collected by Mr. E. J. Oslar.

In this connection there is another matter I wish to mention. In *Psyche* for October, 1924 (mailed Nov. 7). Mr. C. H. Curran described five new Syrphidae. *Microdon pseudoglobosus*, *M. conflictus*, *M. ocellaris*, *M. manitobensis* and *Cerioides proxima*. No holotypes were designated, therefore all the specimens mentioned in that paper are cotypes. In the Kansas University Science Bulletin, Vol. 15, Dec. 1924 (issued Dec. 1, 1925), the above mentioned species were again described as new, with no reference to the paper in *Psyche*. Holotypes were selected for all the species, except *M. manitobensis*, together with allotypes and paratypes.

Under *Microdon pseudoglobosus*, the first specimen mentioned in *Psyche* is made the holotype, and is said to be in the University of Kansas Museum, but further on he says: "The holotype is in the museum of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Harrisburg, Pa." A number of additional specimens are included under paratypes, but the cotypes of the first paper from Chittenden, Vt., and Cape May, N. J., are not cited.

Under *M. conflictus*, the first specimen mentioned in *Psyche* is also made the holotype. There are also a number of additional specimens not recorded in the first paper, but the cotypes from Washington, Mass., and Bar Harbor, Me., are not cited.

Under *M. ocellaris* the first specimen mentioned in *Psyche* is again made the holotype and all of the other cotypes cited, with no additional records.

Under *M. manitobensis* in the first paper the author says: "Fifteen specimens of both sexes, Megantic, Que., Capen, Me., Oquossoc, Me., Southwest Harbor, Me., Elmboro, Sask., Ottawa, Ont.; several specimens Manitoba." In the second paper he

says: "Described from thirty specimens of both sexes from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Maine" * * * "The types are in the Canadian National Collection, Ottawa; Kansas University Museum; Bureau of Plant Industry, Harrisburg, Pa.; and the collections of C. B. D. Garrett, Dr. A. J. Hunter, and the author." Note that the cotypes from Capen, Oquossoc and Southwest Harbor, Maine, are not mentioned.

Under *Ceroides proxima* the first specimen mentioned in Psyche is made the holotype but the cotypes from Bennington, Vt.; Megantic, Que.; Boncher, Sask.; Vernon, B. C., are not cited.

Having been largely responsible for the publication of the paper in Psyche, as I wished at the time to add the species to my New England list of Diptera, I have hesitated to criticize the second paper, for it is far from a pleasant task. By omitting a reference to the first paper and changing the character of the types, the second paper is very misleading and will cause trouble in the future as to the date of publication of the above species and the true standing and location of the types. Only the specimens mentioned in the first paper are types, and as no holotypes were made at the time they are all cotypes. Holotypes could not be made in the second paper and the additional specimens under paratypes have no standing as types. The specimens selected as holotypes might be considered lectotypes, but not being thus designated this is questionable. Of the above cotypes those from New England are in the collection of the Boston Society of Natural History and the one from Cape May, N. J., is in the writer's collection. The species of *Microdon* were all returned as paratypes and the *Ceroides proxima* as a "metatype" although not recorded as such in the second paper. A specimen of *M. conflictus* from Westville, N. J., in my collection was returned marked "paratype," but is not recorded in either paper.

The rules governing the making of types are so explicit that this muddle seems uncalled for. There is no rule covering lectotypes, and only in the case of a composite species does it seem necessary to select one. Therefore the promiscuous making of lectotypes seems very objectionable, because no one has the right to deliberately lessen the value of specimens in the possession of others.
